Development of ancillary units of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

7232. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of letters of intent which have been issued for development of ancillary units of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant;

(b) how many of them are Small Scale Industries units; and

(c) what is the extent of workers participation in management of the Steel Plant and at what levels?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Visakhapatnam Steel Plant have issued Letters of Intent for establishing ancillary units in 12 entrepreneurs and all the 12 units are Small Scale Industries units.

(c) For promoting workers participation and involvement in crucial areas of production, productivity and safety, Visakhapatnam Steel Plan has provided Bi-partite Forums at the Shop levels, at the Plant level and at the Corporate level. There are 45 Bi-partite Committees where workmen nominated by the recognised unions are the members. In addition, there are 10 other Bi-partite Forums where workmen are involved in matters relating to Sports, Town Development Community Welfare etc. Besides, 635 Quality Circles consisting of small groups of workmen and officers have been constituted to identify problems in their area of work and suggest solutions for the same.

Sick Iron Ore Mines in Orissa

7233. SHRI RAHAS BIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of iron ore mines Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts in Orissa which have fallen sick;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to revise those iron ore mines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): According to information furnished by the Government of Orissa, 4 mines in Mayurbhanj district, 4 in Sundargarh district and 2 in Keonjhar district are reported to be closed. Production in other mines is also stated to have fallen substantially during the year 1993 as compared to the production in the year 1992.

(b) The reason for closure and fall in production in the mines is reported to be mainly the decline in export and domestic demand.

(c) Some of the mine owners are reported to be making efforts to prepare calibrated iron ore which at present has a better market. Improved market conditions will also help in the revival of the mines.

High Cost of ferro-alloys prouced in the country

7234. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ferro-alloys produced in the country would become costlier than imported ferro-alloys after the reduction of import duty from 85 per cent to 50 per cent as proposed in the budget;

(b) whether it is a fact that the high cost of power in domestic production of ferro-alloys as compared to imported ferro-alloys is a major hindrance for domestic ferro-alloys producers to become competitive both in domestic and overseas market; and